

Message Text

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ACTION AF-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-10
L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15 ICA-11
IO-13 MCT-02 AID-05 PC-01 /085 W
-----030231 011305Z /45
R 010635Z AUG 78
FM AMEMBASSY LAGOS
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9797
INFO AMCONSUL KADUNA

C O N F I D E N T I A L LAGOS 9467

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PDEV, NI
SUBJECT: COMMUNAL TENSIONS IN MAIDUGURI

REF: LAGOS 7142, KADUNA 672, LAGOS A-68, LAGOS A-67

1. IN FOLLOW UP ON REPORTS OF COMMUNAL TENSION
IN MAIDUGURI, EMBASSY OFFICER SPOKE WITH ABBA
BASHIR, PRINCIPAL ASSISTANT SECRETARY, MILITARY
GOVERNOR'S OFFICE, BORNO STATE ON JULY 19, IN
MAIDUGURI. EMBASSY HAS HAD A NUMBER OF CONTACTS
WITH BASHIR AND HE APPEARS TO BE FORTHCOMING AND
FRIENDLY TO THE U.S.

2. BASHIR INFORMED EMBOFF THAT AT HEIGHT OF
TENSION THREE LORRIES FULL OF IBOS WERE
LEAVING MAIDUGURI EACH DAY. THE TOTAL NUMBER OF
THOSE FLEEING THE CITY PROBABLY REACHED 3,000.
MOST OF THE IBO BUSINESSMEN CLOSED UP THEIR STORES
BEFORE LEAVING, BUT FEW SOLD THEIR GOOD IN
ENTIRETY, INDICATING HOPE FOR EVENTUAL RETURN.
THE RUMORS WERE APPARENTLY STARTED "BY A FEW
INDISCREET UTTERANCES" BY MUSLIMS IN THE NORTH
AND BY INFLAMMATORY MEMORANDA CIRCULATED IN THE
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CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY AFTER THE SHARIA CRISIS IN
LATE MAY. ACCORDING TO BASHIR, THESE MEMOS WERE
ON THE SUBJECT OF SEEKING "REVENGE" FOR THE MUSLIM
DEFEAT. HE WOULD NOT SAY WHO THE AUTHORS WERE.

3. IN RESPONSE TO THE SITUATION, THE SHEHU OF
BORNO AND SENIOR GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS WALKED THE

STREETS TO CALM THE POPULACE. LATER,
GOVERNMENT LEADERS MET WITH THE BISHOPS OF THE
VARIOUS CHRISTIAN CHURCHES IN MAIDUGURI TO DISPEL
ANY REMAINING FEARS. THE CRISIS SEEMS TO
HAVE SUBSIDED, TEMPORARILY AT LEAST, AND IBO
FAMILIES ARE SLOWLY DRIFING BACK INTO TOWN.
WYMAN

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Message Attributes

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Draft Date: 01 aug 1978
Decaption Date: 01 jan 1960
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Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
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